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#5 of 5

CLAREMONT
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X-MEN®
BLACK SUN™

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WOLVERINE® AND THUNDERBIRD™

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THE FIVE *BLOODSTONES* ARE MINE!
THE *CIRCLE OF THE ABYSS* IS *COMPLETE!*
AT LONG LAST, FOR MY DREAD *MASTERS* AND FOR *MYSELF* --
VICTORY!

X-MEN: BLACK SUN

FINAL SPELL: Cast the Magik!

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THE PLACE IS LIMBO, A PAN-DIMENSIONAL REALM THAT MIRACULOUSLY HAS ACCESS TO EVERY POINT OF TIME AND SPACE IN THE COSMOS.
THE PLAYERS: ON THE ONE HAND, AN INVADING HORDE OF DAEMONIC CREATURES KNOWN AS THE N'GARAI.
ON THE OTHER, FOUR MUTANTS WHO ARE PRETTY MUCH THE ONLY THING STANDING BETWEEN THEM AND THEIR CURRENT GOAL, THE PLANET EARTH.
MAGIK.
THUNDERBIRD.
WOLVERINE.
PHOENIX.
THE SITUATION PRETTY MUCH SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.

HOWEVER, FOR THOSE WHO CAME IN LATE ...
POSSESSION OF THE BLOODSTONES WILL ALLOW BELASCO TO OPEN A MULTITUDE OF TRANSMAT GATES BETWEEN THE N'GARAI HOME DIMENSION AND LIMBO, AND THEN BETWEEN LIMBO AND EARTH.
BEFORE THE WORLD HAS TIME TO REALIZE IT'S UNDER ATTACK, IT WILL BE OVERWHELMED.
EVEN OUR HEROES, FOR ALL THEIR AWESOME MIGHT, WON'T BE ABLE TO WITHSTAND SUCH AN ONSLAUGHT.
AND WITH CONTROL OF LIMBO, THEY CAN AS EASILY SPREAD TO EVERY WORLD, EVERY DIMENSION, ALONG THE SIDEREAL STRING.
OUR ONLY HOPE IS TO STOP THEM HERE.
LIKE LEONIDAS AN' HIS SPARTANS AT THERMOPYLAE.
YOUR JOB IS TO PREVENT THEIR ADVANCE. MINE IS TO SHATTER THE SPELL THAT BROUGHT THEM HERE.
YOU INTEND ON DEFEATING BELASCO ALL BY YOURSELF?
NOT QUITE. I STILL HAVE SOME ACES UP MY SLEEVE.
IT'S TIME THE DEMON LORD WAS REMINDED THAT HE'S A USURPER HERE.
IN LIMBO, IT'S MAGIK WHO MAKES THE RULES.
AND MAGIK WHO HAS THE POWER TO BREAK THEM!
LADY CAN CERTAINLY TALK THE TALK.
ANY SUGGESTIONS ON OUR NEXT MOVE?
I WAS THINKING ABOUT WHAT MAKES THE BEST DEFENSE.
THAT WOULD BE A GOOD OFFENSE, YES?
MAY I HAVE THE HONOR?
YOU GO, NEAL. THIS I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE.

NEAL SHAARA HAS ALWAYS BEEN RELUCTANT TO USE HIS POWER.
PARTLY, IT'S THE NEWNESS OF IT ALL. A YEAR AGO, HE HAD NO IDEA HE WAS A MUTANT -- BORN WITH POWERS THAT TRANSCEND THE BASELINE HUMAN GENOME.
THEN, ONE DAY, HE DISCOVERED -- THE HARD WAY -- THAT HE CAN METABOLIZE AND PROJECT THE ESSENCE OF THE SUN ITSELF, IN BEAMS OF RAW NUCLEAR PLASMA.
SHHOOM!
FROM THAT MOMENT, HIS GREATEST FEAR WAS DOING HARM TO SOME INNOCENT.
IN LIMBO, AGAINST THE N'GARAI, THAT ISN'T A PROBLEM.
WITH JUST A THOUGHT --
-- I STROKED THE LAND WITH A FIRE SO INTENSE, I FUSED THE GROUND TO GLASS!
THERE'S NOTHING LEFT!
VISHNU FORGIVE ME, I COULD DO THE SAME THING BACK HOME, JUST AS EASILY.
WAIT -- THERE'S MOVEMENT AROUND THE CAIRN!
A SECOND WAVE!
PERSISTENT LITTLE DEVILS.
GUESS THEY DON'T KNOW WHEN OR HOW T' QUIT.
WELL, NEITHER DO I.

LIKE HIS NAMESAKE, **WOLVERINE** POSSESSES A FEROCITY AND INDOMITABLE WILL ALL OUT OF PROPORTION TO HIS SIZE.
WHAT MAKES HIM A MUTANT IS A **HEALING FACTOR** THAT CAN COPE WITH ANY WOUND OR DISEASE, MAKING HIM VIRTUALLY **IMPOSSIBLE** TO KILL.
WHAT MAKES HIM SUPREMELY **DEADLY** IS A SKELETON LACED WITH THE METAL **ADAMANTIUM,** MAKING IT **UNBREAKABLE** ...
... AND **CLAWS** COVERED WITH THE PURE ALLOY THAT CAN CUT THROUGH **ANYTHING.**
THE FINAL ELEMENT IN THE EQUATION IS A **BERSERKER RAGE** THAT TRANSFORMS HIM INTO THE ULTIMATE FIGHTING MACHINE. FROM THIS POINT, HE WILL FIGHT UNTIL THE **ENEMY** IS NO MORE ... OR **HE** IS. THERE CAN BE NO OTHER OUTCOME.
EVEN THE N'GARAI ARE TAKEN ABACK BY SUCH PRIMAL **FEROCITY**.
IT IS A SIDE OF HIMSELF HE RARELY SHOWS, ESPECIALLY TO HIS FELLOW **X-MEN**. NOT LIKE **THIS**.
HE IS A MAN **POSSESSED** ...
... EMBRACING THIS **MORTAL COMBAT** WITHOUT HESITATION OR REGRET ...
... TO THE **FULLEST** EXTENT OF HIS CAPABILITIES.
HE WILL NEVER ADMIT IT, NOT EVEN TO HIMSELF, BUT THIS IS THE **CLOSEST** HE'S EVER LIKELY TO COME ...
... TO WHAT A MAJOR PART OF HIS SOUL CONSIDERS **HEAVEN**.

MY TURN.
ALIEN THOUGH THEY ARE, AND FOUL BEYOND IMAGINING, THE N'GARAI STILL HAVE MINDS.
THAT MAKES THEM VULNERABLE TO MY TELEPATHY.
FIND THE RIGHT PSYCHIC KEY, THEY'LL BE TOO BUSY TRYING TO COPE WITH THE ONRUSHING CHAOS WITHIN THEIR OWN HEADS TO WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE.
AT THE SAME TIME, I CAN SUPER-CHARGE MY TEAMMATES ...
... TO ALLOW THEM TO SUSTAIN THIS MAXIMUM EFFORT PRETTY NEAR INDEFINITELY.
THE LINK'S A TWO-WAY STREET. IN WOLVERINE'S HEAD, JEAN SUDDENLY APPEARS AS A COMPLEMENT TO HIMSELF ...
... AS ELEMENTAL AND OVERFLOWING WITH BLOODY PASSION AS HIMSELF.
WHILE THUNDERBIRD BEHOLDS KALI, THE GIVER AND TAKER OF LIFE.
AND JEAN HERSELF FINDS RESONANCES IN HER SOUL TO BOTH PERCEPTIONS.
SHE FEELS THE BEGINNINGS OF A GREAT AND TERRIBLE JOY, THAT CARRIES WITH IT A HUNGER FOR MORE.
IT IS A TEMPTATION SHE HAS FELT BEFORE, WITH CONSEQUENCES SHE KNOWS ONLY TOO WELL.
WHICH IS WHY SHE'S DETERMINED TO DENY IT.

MEANWHILE ...
VERY IMPRESSIVE, BELASCO.
BUT SO AM *I!*

ANCIENT WORDS ARE SPOKEN ...
... ELDRITCH ENERGIES OBEDIENTLY LEAPING FROM MAGIK'S SOULSWORD TO THE PENTAGRAM ETCHED IN THE ROCK BEFORE HER.
THE SPELL REACHES ITS ZENITH ...
... AND THE ESSENCES OF FOUR HEROES INCARCERATED WITHIN THE SWORD ARE ONCE AGAIN MADE CORPOREAL FLESH.
ARCHANGEL.
BEAST.
ICEMAN.
POLARIS.
KRAK
PARDON MY ASKING, BUT WEREN'T WE DEAD?
ON EARTH, ABSOLUTELY.
IN LIMBO, ONLY WHEN I ALLOW IT.
I'M MAGIK. A DEMON-MAGE NAMED BELASCO IS RESPONSIBLE. HE'S USING YOUR SOULS TO ALLOW HIS MASTERS, THE N'GARAI, TO CONQUER BOTH LIMBO AND EARTH.
TO STOP HIM, AND SAVE YOURSELVES, WE HAVE TO GET THEM BACK.
UNFORTUNATELY, HE HAS FOUR OTHER X-MEN, POSSESSED BY DEMONS, ACTING AS BODYGUARDS. TO REACH HIM, YOU'LL HAVE TO DEFEAT THEM.
ANY IDEAS?

SINCE WE WERE EACH ATTACKED BY A FELLOW X-MAN, WE AT LEAST KNOW OUR ADVERSARIES: **STORM, COLOSSUS, NIGHTCRAWLER, SUNFIRE** AND **BANSHEE**.
FIRST GENERATION X-MEN VERSUS THE SECOND.
POLARIS, I KNOW YOU CAN SENSE **MAGNETIC** LINES OF FORCE ON EARTH. CAN YOU DO THE SAME WITH LIMBO'S EQUIVALENT? BY **SCRAMBLING** THEM, YOU SHOULD INHIBIT NIGHTCRAWLER'S ABILITY TO **TELEPORT**.
I CAN TRY, BEAST.
I CAN PUT THE BAD GUYS ON "**ICE**." INSTANT CRYOGENIC **SUSPENDED ANIMATION**.
WHATEVER YOU DECIDE, THE KEY IS KEEPING BELASCO'S QUARTET BUSY, LEAVING ME A CLEAR RUN AT THE MAN HIMSELF.
I HATE TO BE **BRUTAL,** BUT LIKE **HOW** MANY TIMES HAVE WE TRIED THIS COCKAMAMIE SCENARIO?
THEY'RE **DEMONS,** WINGS ... FROM THE **INFERNAL** REGIONS. WHAT DO THEY KNOW FROM **COLD?**
WITH ANY LUCK, THEY WON'T KNOW HOW TO **COPE**.
SO MUCH FOR **THAT** IDEA!

WE NEED A NEW PLAN, PEOPLE!
THESE GUYS ARE **GOOD!**
LORNA, USE YOUR ***MAGNETIC*** POWERS ...
... TO TURN STORM'S ***LIGHTNING*** BACK AGAINST HERSELF!
HANK, ***LOOK OUT!***
IT'S ***COLOSSUS!***
THOOM
YOU SHOULD HAVE STAYED WITHIN THE WITCH-CHILD'S **SWORD**.
SINCE YE'RE BODIES **WIT'OUT** SOULS, THAT MAKES YE FAIR PREY F'R **POSSESSION** BY WHATEVER DEMON COMES ALONG.
THE **CALL** HAS ALREADY GONE OUT.
IN NO TIME AT ALL, YE'LL BE **OURS!**
YOU'LL PARDON US, I PRAY, FOR HAVING ***OTHER*** NOTIONS.
THE SOUND IN MY HELMET ***MUTED*** THE EFFECTS OF BANSHEE'S ***SONIC SCREAM!***
AND MY OWN ***AGILITY*** WILL KEEP ME CLEAR OF COLOSSUS'S ARMORED ***MIGHT!***
THWAM
AT LEAST POLARIS MANAGED TO TAKE DOWN ***NIGHTCRAWLER*** IN THE MELEE.
THAT LEAVES BUT ***FOUR***.
PLUS THEIR BOSS.
ASSUMING THIS *"MAGIK"* CAN BE ***TRUSTED***.

BACK AT THE MANSION...
...THE N'GARAI BODY-COUNT HAS LONG SINCE BECOME FUNCTIONALLY NUMBERLESS.
IT DOESN'T MATTER.
THEY JUST KEEP ON COMING.
POWER LEVELS REMAIN SECURE. I'M HAVING NO TROUBLE MAINTAINING NEAL AND LOGAN AT THEIR PEAK.
IT'S FATIGUE THAT'S THE DANGER.
TO HELP THEM FIGHT, I'VE BEEN ABSORBING THE BRUNT OF THEIR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL EXHAUSTION --
-- BUT THAT'S GRADUALLY STARTING TO TAKE ITS TOLL ON ME!
MORE MEAT! HOW DELIGHTFUL!
ANOTHER N'GARAI?!
HOW'D IT GET INSIDE THE HOUSE?
IT'S GOT PSYLOCKE!
PROFANITY!
THIS ONE IS -- PILGRIMM!

LIKE, I CARE!
YOU ATTACK THE X-MEN, MONSTER...
SNIKT
...YOU PAY THE ULTIMATE PRICE!
YOU FELT MY ANGER.
NOW PREPARE FOR THE WRATH!
IT MAY TRY.
BUT IT MAY DISCOVER IN THE PROCESS THAT PILGRIMM IS NOT SO EASILY KILLED.
DOES HE REALIZE I'M RUNNING A BLUFF?
I'M USING MY TELEPATHY TO MAKE HIM BELIEVE I POSSESS WOLVERINE'S CLAWS AND THUNDERBIRD'S PLASMA BEAMS -- WAIT?!
THE IMAGES FROM HIS MIND --
-- YOU'RE NOT N'GARAI!
WHAT IS THIS?
THIS ONE'S WOUNDS -- VANISH!
WHAT DEVIOUS MEAT!
USING ITS THOUGHTS TO CREATE ILLUSIONS.
THIS ONE, BY CONTRAST, TRAFFICS SOLELY IN REALITY.

ALLOW PILGRIMM TO DEMONSTRATE.
YOU ARE R'UTAI!
MY APOLOGIES FOR THE MISTAKE.
I SEE IN YOUR MEMORIES A HATRED FOR THE N'GARAI!
AS THIS ONE DEALS WITH IT, SO SHALL PILGRIMM DEAL WITH THEM.
IN BLOOD AND SCREAMS!
NOT IF THE N'GARAI CONQUER LIMBO.
LOOK OUTSIDE. HOW LONG WILL YOUR OWN PEOPLE LAST AGAINST THAT HORDE? THIS TIME, THE X-MEN AREN'T YOUR ENEMIES, BUT YOUR POSSIBLE SALVATION!
YOUR FIGHT SHOULDN'T BE WITH US, BUT WITH THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS INVASION... BELASCO!
THERE IS A PASSION — A TRUTH — TO ITS WORDS THAT PILGRIMM HAS HEARD FROM ONLY ONE OTHER OF YOUR KIND.
YET IT TRANSCENDS WOLVERINE IN EVERY WAY.
I'LL TAKE THAT AS A COMPLIMENT.
THE SOUL OF THE PHOENIX IS THE R'UTAI SOUL.
YOU MAY SAY SO, I SAY DIFFERENT.
IT WOULD BE THE ULTIMATE HONOR TO CONSUME SUCH A CREATURE.
BUT WHAT PRICE HONOR IF IT MEANS THE SACRIFICE OF R'UTAI?
WHEN THIS ONE HAS DEALT WITH BELASCO, WE SHALL MEET AGAIN.
NOT IF I CAN HELP IT, PILGRIMM.
NOT NOW, NOT EVER!

BELASCO'S CASTLE...
I GUESS EXPERIENCE *DOES* COUNT, GUYS!
WE'VE GOT THESE *RINGERS* ON THE ROPES!
SURE LOOKS THAT WAY, POPSICLE!
SO WHY DON'T I FEEL MORE LIKE CHEERING?
ON THE FACE OF IT, OUR FOES GAVE A DECENT ACCOUNT OF THEMSELVES. THE BATTLE WAS IN DOUBT ALMOST TO ITS END.
WRONG, BEAST. THE OUTCOME WAS **NEVER** *IN DOUBT.*
YOUR **DEFEAT** *WAS FOREORDAINED BEFORE WE EVEN BEGAN!*
WHAT THE --?!

SKRAMM
AS WE WERE POSSESSED...
...SO SHALL YOU BE.
DEMON, YOUR DAY IS DONE!
N'GARAI ARE NOTHING!
R'UTAI ARE ALL!
THE HUMAN WORLD WILL NEVER BE THEIRS TO CLAIM.
IT BELONGS TO US!

SO FAR, SO GOOD.
I'VE SLIPPED PAST THE CASTLE'S EVERY DEFENSE TO REACH BELASCO'S SANCTUM SANCTORUM.
AND THERE ARE THE ***BLOODSTONES!***
SADLY, APPRENTICE, THIS IS AS ***CLOSE*** AS YOU'RE GOING TO GET.
AARGH!
SUCH A PITY. SUCH A ***WASTE***.
OF ALL MY APPRENTICES, YOU SHOWED THE ***MOST*** PROMISE. THERE WAS A ***SHADOW*** ON YOUR SOUL THAT RIVALED MY OWN.
*ONLY BECAUSE **YOU** PUT IT THERE!*
*WHAT, DID YOU THINK MY **BEST FRIEND** WOULDN'T HAVE SOMEONE WATCHING HER **BACK?!***
*OR IF THE OPPORTUNITY AROSE, GIVE ME A CHANCE FOR SOME **PAYBACK?!***

WHEN I THINK OF HOW I SUFFERED BECAUSE OF YOU --!
WHEN I THINK OF HOW YOU MADE ME LITTLE MORE THAN YOUR PUPPET --!
DEAR SWEET DELUDED KATHERINE --
-- WHATEVER MAKES YOU THINK THAT ROLE HAS CHANGED?!
BEHOLD THE VISION OF THE TRUE SHADOWCAT, AS YOU WERE ALWAYS MEANT TO BE!
THERE IS NONE WHO KNOW YOU AS INTIMATELY AS I --
YOUR POWER IS NOTHING.
AND YOUR PRECIOUS MAGIK EVEN LESS!
-- SO IT WILL TAKE BUT THE SMALLEST PORTION OF MY OWN BLACK AND TWISTED SOUL TO MAKE THIS VISION REALITY!

BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH...
THAT'S THE BELASCO I REMEMBER.
TOO MUCH OF A **MOTORMOUTH** BY FAR...
...AND SO **ARROGANT** HE'D NEVER REALIZE WE MIGHT HAVE ALREADY FIGURED ALL THIS OUT.
AND **PLANNED** ACCORDINGLY.
WHAT DO YOU ***MEAN*****--?!**
MAGIK!
WRETCHED GIRL -- YOU WERE ***SHAMMING!***
WELLLL -- **DUH!**
SHOULD HAVE PAID MORE ATTENTION TO ***BUSINESS.***
IT'S JUST COST YOU ***EVERYTHING!***
MY SOUL!
IT'S RETURNING! I'M MYSELF -- I'M **WHOLE** -- AGAIN!
YOU ARE STILL ***TOO LATE!***
THE BLOODSTONES WERE BUT THE ***CATALYST***. THE SPELL ITSELF IS ***SELF-PERPETUATING!***
UNLESS IT'S ACTIVELY ***DISRUPTED!***
THAT, I WILL NOT ***ALLOW!***
SILLY SORCERER, HOW CAN YOU ***PREVENT*** IT?!

"THINK ABOUT WHAT'S JUST HAPPENED, BELASCO! THINK ABOUT WHO'VE JUST GOTTEN BACK THEIR SOULS! THINK OF HOW THEY MUST *FEEL* ABOUT IT, AND ABOUT *YOU!*"
THE *R'UTAI* DOES NOTHING BUT *WATCH,* COMRADES.
SO LONG AS HE KEEPS HIS DISTANCE, THAT'S SUITS ME.
CONSIDER BELASCO'S CASTLE LIKE A BIG *ENGINE*...
...GENERATING THE *ENERGIES* NEEDED TO SUSTAIN THE TRANSMAT SPELLS.
WRECKING THE PLACE WON'T DO THE TRICK...
...WE ALSO HAVE TO ***SHATTER*** THE DYNAMIC FORCE MATRICES OF THE MASTER SPELL ITSELF.
LIKE DISRUPTING THE CHAIN REACTION BY DERAILING THE SMOOTH FLOW OF THE NUCLEAR CASCADE. PATTERNS RUN ROUGH, THEY END UP DOING THE WORK FOR US.
FIRST WE ***FREEZE*** THE PLACE, AS CLOSE TO ***ABSOLUTE ZERO*** AS YOU CAN MANAGE, ***ICEMAN!***
THOSE ***ACCURSED*** X-MEN! WILL I ***NEVER*** BE RID OF THEIR INTERFERENCE?!
PERISH THE THOUGHT! WE LIVE TO ***RUIN*** YOUR DAY, BIG GUY!
AND IF YOU'RE THINKING OF MAKING A QUICK ***EXIT***...
...NO DICE!
I'LL JUST KEEP YOU NICE AND ***INTANGIBLE,*** SO YOUR SPELLS HAVE ***NOTHING*** WHATSOEVER TO LATCH ONTO.
YOU'LL ***DIE*** TOO, GIRL. IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?
TO SEE YOU ***NAILED,*** I'LL TAKE THE RISK, WITH A ***SMILE!***
READY WHEN YOU ARE, MAGIK!
THE ELEMENTS ARE IN ALIGNMENT. WHEN THE X-MEN STRIKE, SO WILL ***I!***
OK, LORNA, YOUR TURN.
WE'VE MADE THE CASTLE AN ULTIMATE SUPER-CONDUCTOR. NOW YOU NEED TO ***SATURATE*** ITS POWER WITH ENERGY.
FILL IT TILL IT'S READY TO ***POP!***
EVERYONE ELSE, I SUGGEST YOU FIND COVER AND PUT YOUR HEADS DOWN.
IF THIS WORKS, THE RESULT SHOULD BE QUITE ***SPECTACULAR.***
IF IT ***DOESN'T*** --!

NOW, **SUNFIRE** -- VAPORIZE THE ICE!
AND THAT WILL --?!
OVERLOAD THE PHYSICAL SYSTEM.
THAT'S MY CUE TO DO THE SAME TO THE **MAGICAL** POWER GRID!
BOOM!
AS IT TURNED OUT, THE BEAST **UNDERSTATED** THOSE RESULTS.
OF BELASCO'S CASTLE, NAUGHT REMAINS BUT **DUST**.
THE SAME FOR THE **N'GARAI CAIRN**.
AND FOR THOSE WARRIORS WHO FOUGHT ON LIMBO'S SOIL...
UNTOUCHED AMIDST THE DEVASTATION IS THE REPRESENTATION MAGIK CREATED OF THE X-MEN'S **MANSION**.
AS FOR THE X-MEN THEMSELVES...
...THEIR EFFECT IS QUIET AND SUBDUED.
THE BATTLE, AND THEIR FOES, HAVE LEFT THEIR BODIES UNSCATHED.
NOT SO THEIR HEARTS. NOT SO THEIR SOULS.
THEY'RE A RESILIENT BUNCH. RECOVERY IS A GIVEN.
BUT IT WILL TAKE TIME.

THAT IS *PILGRIMM,* WATCHING US.
WATCHING *ME.*
I CAN SENSE HIM, ON THE PERIPHERY OF MY THOUGHTS, LIKE A TELEPATHIC *SHADOW* I'LL NEVER BE RID OF.
SHALL I DEAL WITH HIM?
WITHOUT HIS HELP, STORM, WE WOULD HAVE LOST.
YOU'RE *HOME,* KITTY, AS PROMISED, SAFE AND SOUND.
THE LASTEST IN A NEVER-ENDING SERIES OF HAIR'S-BREADTH *ESCAPES.*
IT'S *YOUR* HOME, TOO, IF YOU WANT IT.
ONCE, IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN. BUT I'M MAGIK NOW, FAR MORE THAN MUTANT.
MY FRIENDS, COULD IT *BE --?!*
HAS MY SISTER, *ILLYANA,* FOUND A WAY TO CHEAT DEATH?!
HAS SHE COME *BACK* TO US?! TO -- *ME?!*
YOU COULD AT LEAST TELL THEM THE *TRUTH.*
IT ISN'T *FAIR --!*
NO NAMES, KITTY. ESPECIALLY NOT HERE. LET *MAGIK* SUFFICE.
NAMES HAVE *POWER.* SPELLS ARE *SPECIFIC* THINGS. ENCHANTMENTS THAT WORK AGAINST ONE ARE *USELESS* AGAINST ANOTHER --
-- AS BELASCO DISCOVERED TO HIS COST WHEN HE CAST HIS *DEATH SPELL* AGAINST ME.
IT'S A SMALL ADVANTAGE, BUT AGAINST THE LIKES OF HIM AND THE N'GARAI, A *CRUCIAL* ONE.
MAGIK AIN'T COMIN' WITH US, PETEY.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!
LIMBO'S TOO IMPORTANT TO BE LEFT UNGUARDED. SHE HAS THE POWER. WITH IT COMES THE *RESPONSIBILTY.*

BUT WHY *HER?!*
BECAUSE SHE'S *MAGIK*.
WHAT KIND OF ANSWER IS THAT?!
FATE GAVE US THESE ABILITIES, COLOSSUS. BUT *CHARLES XAVIER* GAVE US THE CHOICE OF HOW TO USE THEM.
BY JOINING THE *X-MEN*...
...WE EMBRACED HIS DREAM OF A BETTER TOMORROW, AND THE RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP THAT TOMORROW COME TO PASS.
BUT AS WITH EVERY GREAT DREAM, THERE IS A *PRICE*.
AND THAT IS *FAIR?!*
LOOK ABOUT YOU, MY FRIEND, AND CONSIDER WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN WERE THERE *NO* X-MEN.
YOU EVER *NEED* ANYTHING --!
SHRIMP SALAD FROM *ZABAR'S* WOULD BE NICE. A BAGEL AND SOME LOX.
SHE SAYS SHE'LL BE IN TOUCH.
ALSO, THAT WE DID *GOOD*.
AMEN TO THAT, *AMANDA!* AND TO YOU, *BEST* OF ALL.
OUR *MOTHER* WOULD HAVE BEEN *PROUD*.
NIGHTCRAWLER, YOU *KNEW?!*
WE WERE IN *LOVE, KATZCHEN*. SOME THINGS YOU NEVER *FORGET*.
I'LL REMEMBER YOU IN MY *PRAYERS,* MAGIK! *ALWAYS!*
LIKEWISE, ELF!
I'M GLAD YOU *APPROVE*.
THIS IS *RIGHT* FOR ME, AS THE *PRIESTHOOD* IS FOR YOU.
KURT BATTLES EVIL WITH HIS *FAITH,* WHILE I USE MY SPELLS, STRENGTH AND SWORD ARM.
I WAS NEVER AN *X-MAN,* BUT THROUGH THE MAN I *LOVED,* I'M AS MUCH A PRODUCT OF *CHARLES XAVIER'S* DREAM AS ANY OF YOU!
AND WHAT AFTER ALL IS A *DREAM,* BUT ANOTHER WORD FOR...
MAGIK! the Beginning!
To follow Amanda's further adventures, pick up MAGIK #1, ON SALE NEXT MONTH!